

**November 30, 2007**



**A. RODDICK/D.** Tursunov

6-4, 6-4, 6-2

USA - 1

Russia - 0

An interview with:

## **ANDY RODDICK**

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Andy.

**Q. Obviously you never won Davis Cup final in the United States before. How does it feel different from the others?**

ANDY RODDICK: Well, I never played a Davis Cup final in the United States, so it would be tough to win one.

It's amazing. I've kind of thought about it for a long time. The crowd was amazing. I mean, that last game when they just stood up was probably one of the coolest moments of my career so far.

You know, we're a third of the way there, which is even more important.

**Q. You looked very excited to get out there. Even during the anthem it looked like you were pumped up, ready to go. You played composed, collected during the match, didn't let your emotions get the best of you.**

ANDY RODDICK: Yeah, I mean, it's tough to keep it in check. I definitely had to make a conscious effort to go out there. I knew I was going to be tight the first couple of games. That was a given.

But, you know, I wanted to be able to kind of maybe serve my way through a couple of

games, get my feet in. Once I did, I felt pretty good out there actually. I didn't get overly excited, but I thought I did when it was needed.

**Q. The unlimited challenges seemed to play a big part in the match on both sides of the net. Do you see that thing playing out?**

ANDY RODDICK: The fact they were unlimited had no bearing. I mean, if it was two challenges it would have worked out the exact same way. I think "unlimited" is a little... How many times have you seen someone run out of challenges? Twice, three times? I think "unlimited" is a little much.

Luckily, I don't think either guy really abused it too much. We were probably right more than we were wrong. I think unlimited challenge isn't really necessary, but I've always been a fan of the challenge system.

**Q. When your serve is on like it was today, it sometimes doesn't matter so much what the other guy does. Were you surprised at all with how little Dmitry showed you today? Was he playing okay? What do you think?**

ANDY RODDICK: Well, you know, I thought the one thing that I knew going in is that Dmitry's a pretty streaky player. He has some ups and downs in a match. So my whole -- one of my biggest goals was to try to return well, so he was having to play every service game, so I'm giving myself a chance to give him a chance to play a bad game.

I was able to do that. I was able to kind of keep the pressure on. Even the games I was losing on his serve, I felt I was making the returns that I was supposed to. I thought that if I did that, that I'd be okay.

And so, you know, I don't know if he had his best day, but I was making him hit a lot of shots.

**Q. It was very striking to me that one of the first things you said on court afterwards**

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**was about James, how much you want it for him. I know you always say it's all about getting three points no matter what, but how much would you like to see him get this point?**

ANDY RODDICK: I mean, I want to see him get this point for a lot of reasons. You know, I'd love to see him, you know, come through. I'd love to give the twins a chance to clinch.

You know, we got to get three points. We have one. If we can get two after the first day, I really, really like our chances. So this is a big match in this tie. You know, I'm going to be pulling for him, for sure.

**Q. Can you put into words, you know him better than most people, what would this mean to him, what would it mean for you as his friend, as his teammate, to see him do this?**

ANDY RODDICK: I'd be real proud, that's for sure. But I'm proud of him regardless if he comes through and wins this tennis match today or not.

I think it would mean a lot to him. He takes his fair share of criticism, as well. You know, it would be nice for him to come through and win this match on this stage. And, you know, I think he can do it.

**Q. On having the first match of the tie, how important is it, do you think, to set the tone, to get that first point? Did you play the first match in Spain against Nadal, or was it the second match?**

ANDY RODDICK: I think it was the second match.

**Q. Just talk about the importance of setting the tone for the weekend, how you handle that coming out in the first match.**

ANDY RODDICK: Well, I think it's probably easier to play the first match, in all honesty. You know, it's just less time to sit around and think about the situation. I've been fortunate enough to play first I think this whole year so far.

But at the same time, like you said, I wanted to set the tone for the tie, whether it be with energy or a result, you know, so on and so forth. I was looking forward to that opportunity.

**Q. You never really in tennis get a chance to look ahead two months to a big, big match. In a slam you have a couple days at most. How have you managed to handle that**

**psychologically the last couple months, knowing this was coming up?**

ANDY RODDICK: It's weird. It seems like it took forever to get here. Once we arrived on Sunday, it felt like it just flew by till today. So it was a little different.

But it's advantageous. Kind of I knew what I had to do. I knew what I had to do to be healthy. I knew what I had to do to be in shape. You actually had enough time to plan it out. Just think how well everyone would play if we had an off-season. You say, What's that like? That's actually normal in most sports, right?

So, you know, I enjoyed it. I enjoyed being able to at least know what was ahead of me and actually plan a little bit.

**Q. You had that one mini crisis: Three double-faults in that one game, and then pulled yourself out of that.**

ANDY RODDICK: It was only a mini crisis because I got out of it. That was a horrible game. But thank you for being kind. That was terrible (smiling).

**Q. The way you got out of that problem was with your serve, which was dominant all day today.**

ANDY RODDICK: It's what got me into that problem, too.

**Q. What was the turning point? When did you feel like you had it in the bag?**

ANDY RODDICK: Probably the second break in the third set. You know, I let it slip from two sets and a break up this year. You know, but I like my chances up two sets and two breaks most times, especially on a court that's taking the serve, the action of the serve, pretty well.

I felt like I like my chances a lot more once I got that second break in the third set.

**Q. There are two major kind of subtexts in the two stories that everybody is following. One is if you win here at home, it's supposed to give a big boost to U.S. tennis. The second is it's the U.S. versus Russia, the eternal competition. Do you see both of those subtexts? Has the U.S. and Russia played itself out?**

ANDY RODDICK: To be honest, I'm not really old enough to fully get the underlying story of

USA and Russia. Is this about stuff that happened a long time ago or is this about people getting together and bringing their best tennis players to win a team tennis event?

I'd probably lean towards the latter. Beyond that, I mean, it's a tennis match. I have a lot of respect for all the Russian players and the coaches. We see them throughout the year. It's not like it's all of a sudden we're getting thrown together.

It's very important to us. It's a tennis competition. I think it ends there, though.

**Q. Not exactly a Rocky situation any more?**

ANDY RODDICK: No. That's about all I know from it, is Drago versus Rocky. That was a movie, right (smiling)?

**Q. Do you have any premonition or inkling or feeling when you're warming up that you're going to serve so superbly?**

ANDY RODDICK: I've been serving pretty well in practice all week. I felt like I found my groove in practice. You know, it makes it a lot easier when the court is quick enough to kind of take action on the serve, you know, whether it's slice or whether it's the big one.

You know, you can mix up your second serves a little bit more. That helps. That helps a lot.

**Q. I don't think of players intimidating their opponents as much in tennis as a sport like basketball. McEnroe was famous for intimidating with his antics and actions. Do you set out in a match with fieriness, if you can intimidate an opponent, to do so?**

ANDY RODDICK: I don't know if it's so much intimidation. But, I mean, if there's 12 and a half thousand people behind you and you feel like you can use them to help win a tennis match, you'd be stupid not to, right?

You know, and that goes if you're playing a younger player who hasn't been in that position before. I'm not talking about this match. But, you know, on tour, I mean, you know, it's part of sport. It's not the first time. It's not going to be the last time.

So, sure, with the exception of cheating, I'll do what I can to win a tennis match if that's my job, if that's what I'm supposed to go out and do.

**Q. This group has been together for so many years now with this goal. Was there a little team celebration behind the scenes before you came out here? Now that you got that first win personally, can you taste it a little more than before?**

ANDY RODDICK: No. I mean, that old saying, So close, but so far. That's kind of how I felt since the semifinals.

But, you know, there's no celebration. That's one match. You know, I think everybody's excited that we could potentially be on our way. But, you know, the celebration will be saved until we can actually call the Cup ours, if that happens.

**Q. Do you actually feel like you play better in Davis Cup than on tour, and why would that be?**

ANDY RODDICK: I don't know. I've learned to play better in Davis Cup. My first couple years I didn't really play that well in Davis Cup. I won some matches against people I should definitely beat, but struggled in some of the matches that were a little bit more of a toss-up.

I think I've learned to play better in Davis Cup. I don't know. It's a different feeling. It's a feeling that used to make me pretty uncomfortable, but I've embraced it now. I don't know why. It's something that gets inside you. You're not just playing for selfish motives.

And, like I said, it's something you dream about. It's normally a big situation. I feel like I normally play okay in those types of situations.

**Q. You said on court that it was surreal out there. Was that because it's seven years in the making or one guy playing in front of 12,000 folks? Talk about that.**

ANDY RODDICK: Well, it was all those. I mean, it was also, you know, just having been as a kid and then all of a sudden you're the guy out there. You know, I've been in that crowd going mental. Now to be the guy they're going mental for during a match is just, you know, something you don't expect or ever think about or ever think will become a reality.

That crossed my mind a lot when I was out there. The expectations I had were pretty tough to surpass, and I think it did that. Like I said, when they were really enthusiastic when I got to match point, that was really cool for me.

**Q. Could you talk about the twins' approach on and off the court this week? Is it one of the strengths of the boys that they're seemingly unfazed by anything?**

ANDY RODDICK: They're fazed. They're fazed. You know, they get fired up for Davis Cup. It will be about Tuesday, it will be, "Oh, butterflies." Start rubbing their stomachs and stuff. But I think that helps them.

I think they realize that this is possibly the biggest stage for doubles, and I think they relish that. They've done a great job of kind of cementing their place in the doubles game in Davis Cup so far. You know, I look for that to continue.

**Q. Davis Cup is a team competition, but individually you're moving up the list now on the all-time win list for the U.S. Is that something you think about? Now tied with Arthur Ashe.**

ANDY RODDICK: I mean, I don't know if I think about it from a standpoint of, you know, you don't make individual goals for Davis Cup. It's surreal. I mean, I know I'm tied with Arthur Ashe, which is just insane. You never think that's going to happen.

I think, you know, Agassi is at 30 or 31. You know, the only other people are McEnroe and Agassi. So, I mean, those are some pretty amazing names to be on a list with, that's for sure.

**Q. Is it hard coming in against a guy like Tursunov compared to Davydenko, because Davydenko maybe you can predict a little more what you're going to see, but Tursunov is such a wildcard in a way?**

ANDY RODDICK: I don't know if either one's easier to prepare for. Davydenko, you know he's going to probably spin his serve, be very solid from the baseline. You probably realize if you play well, you're probably going to get a win. If you play badly, you're probably going to lose. With Tursunov, you can play bad and win, and you can play good and lose.

It's a little more unpredictable, which may play on your mind in the days leading up a little bit more. But they each present a unique challenge.

**Q. It seems when you were a young player coming on to the tour, Patrick looked at the talent, looked into the future, and seemed to nurture a relationship with you. That being the case, can you talk about how that has**

**impacted the consistency with which you have played Davis Cup and the loyalty you've shown to the team.**

ANDY RODDICK: Well, I mean, if we're calling a spade a spade, Patrick and I have had our disagreements before. We've had very heated conversations before, and he'll tell you that as well.

But I think the one thing that has made our relationship stronger is that, just that we've always been able to confront it and talk about it. You know, we share the same passion, which is Davis Cup, which helps you get over, you know, some stupid little arguments, that's for sure.

We've kind of grown together. I think he's become a better captain and, you know, I think I've become a better Davis Cup player.

But the lines of communication have always been open, and I think that's important. As far as me participating, you know, it's something I never thought about not doing.

Even if I did -- Patrick and I have a really good relationship. If I didn't have a good relationship with the captain, I still feel like a feud or a fight, I feel like this cause is bigger than that. So, you know, it probably wouldn't have affected me participating or not. But the fact we have kind of grown together has made us a better team.

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